









Celebration of the Muslim Festival of Id-ul-Fitr (1355 A.H.)  
at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking.



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M. Aftab-ud-Din Ahmed (Inam of the Mosque, Woking)  
addressing the Congregation. His Excellency  
Hafiz Wahba is seen seated in front.

(Photoes by courtesy M/s Sports and General Press Agency, London.)



**Muslim Congregation after Id-ul-Fitr (1355 A.H.)**

in front of Sir Salar Jung Memorial House, The Mosque, Woking, England.



بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

نَحْمَدُكَ يَا رَسُولَ اللَّهِ مُحَمَّدًا خَاتَمَ النَّبِيِّينَ

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## A DECLARATION

I, Mr. Brownson Tackie Tetteh of Gold Coast, Accra, do hereby faithfully and solemnly declare of my own free will that I worship One and Only Allah (God) alone ; that I believe Muhammad to be His Messenger and Servant ; that I respect equally all Prophets—Abraham, Moses, Jesus and others, and that I will live a Muslim life by the help of Allah.

*La ilaha il-Allah Muhammad-ur-Rasul-Allah*

(There is no god but Allah, and Muhammad is His Messenger.)

Dated, 24th October, 1936.

(Sd.) B. T. ISMAIL TETTEH.

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# EID IN ENGLAND

BY K. S. AHMED.

The festival of Eid-ul-Fitr, marking the end of the month of Ramadan, was celebrated at the Shah Jehan Mosque, Woking, on Tuesday, December 15th.

As usual, nearly every member of the Muslim community in England had been informed several days beforehand of the Eid day. This enabled Muslims from different parts of the British Isles, representing various classes, races and countries, to congregate at the Mosque at Woking on this auspicious occasion.

Here in England, during the previous four weeks, we had been passing through a period of most uncertain weather and, on the eve of the Eid, rain fell in torrents continuing far into the night. However, as the darkness of the night gave place to the first rosy streaks of the dawn, the sun, for the first time for a full month, shone brightly and clearly in the azure sky.

This was indeed a happy sign, although admirable arrangements had been made for the comfort of the guests, to enable them to be independent, to a certain extent, of the English climate.

Special trains from London soon began to bring the devotees, many picturesquely and colourfully dressed, to their destination, and the Faithful began to assemble in groups on the rich carpets spread in the large electrically-lit and well-heated Marquee on the lawn of the Mosque grounds.

Here were Fezes in shades of red, top-hats, soft hats, turbans, caps and astrachan hats, gorgeously covered robes and graceful *saris*, lounge suits, frock-coats and even "plus fours." Here were English Muslim ladies and gentlemen from different counties of the British Isles, representatives from Turkey, Iran, Russia, Nigeria, Egypt and India. Here were they all, rich and poor, ready



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to unite in prayer to Allah, and to prostrate themselves as one before the Almighty, testifying to that vast and all-embracing spirit of brotherhood which is Islam's unique and peculiar gift to mankind.

It was indeed a demonstration of the common fraternity of mankind, unique in this land where not only political and social differences but also religious and sectarian schisms are rife.

Thus were the prayers said and thus did we listen to the *Khutba* of the Rev. Imam. The service over, the congregation greeted one another in Muslim fashion, wishing one another a Happy Eid. Afterwards they took part in a very pleasant and appetising luncheon served in an adjoining Marquee, in the course of which the members of the staff of the Woking Mission and their well-wishers, rich and poor alike, vied with one another in discharging the kindly offices of host and servant, irrespective of social status. The luncheon began at 1 p.m. and lasted till 4 p.m., for the gathering numbered nearly 500. This number was especially encouraging as Tuesday was for many a working day, thus making it impossible for them to attend the service.

A large number of the guests left after lunch; some took their leave after tea, and a few stayed to dinner.

It might well be asked why the Eids at Woking are usually a success. The reason is that Eid festivals at Woking, whether the weather is dull or bright, always provide in their English setting a picturesque and an instructive feature, not only for the English Muslims but also for those from afar who are away from Islamic atmosphere and traditions, for here, though it be for only a brief spell, they experience again the home life of Islam.

It is no exaggeration to say that, with the exception of the Holy City of Mecca, nowhere but at the Woking Mosque is there presented the opportunity of seeing as many different nationalities assembled and united by

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the sole bond, the bond of Islam—the religion of peace and amity.

Among those present were His Excellency Sheikh Hafiz Wahba, the Saudi Arabian Minister ; His Excellency Sayid Ali Jawdat, the Iraqi Minister, and Madame Ali Jawdat ; the Ameer Adel Arsalan ; Sir Raza Ali, Agent-General to the Government of India in South Africa ; Sir Abdul and Lady Qadir ; Sirdar Bahadur Sirdar Mohan Singh ; Hadja A'isha Fitzwilliam ; Mr. Rama Rau, Deputy High Commissioner for India ; Lady Baker ; Mr. and Mrs. De Yorke ; Colonel Qureishi ; Captain W. D. Peckham ; Mr. M. Z. Ali Reza ; Rev. S. R. Bawtree ; Mrs. N. Chawosth Musters ; Dr. M. R. Zada ; Mr. Ghory ; Dr. Muhammedi ; M. Bashyr Pickard ; Mrs. Shakir Muhammedi ; Mr. Abdul Qadir Khan and Dr. Ahmad.

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### THE QURANIC CONCEPTION OF GOD

BY THE HON'BLE SHEIKH MUSHIR HUSSAIN KIDWAI OF  
GADIA, BARRISTER-AT-LAW

(Continued from Vol. XXV, p. 9.)

Besides the two names *Ar-Rab* and *Ar-Rahmán* some other names that would be helpful to intelligent scientists are—

- |                    |  |
|--------------------|--|
| <i>Al-Muhaimin</i> | .. He Who guards others in the time of danger. |
| <i>Al-Khāliq</i>   | .. The Creator, the Combiner.                  |
| <i>Al-Raqīb</i>    | .. He Who watches keenly.                      |
| <i>Al-Bāri</i>     | .. The Maker.                                  |
| <i>Al-Hafīz</i>    | .. The Protector.                              |
| <i>Al-Musawwir</i> | .. The Fashioner, the Artist, the Designer.    |
| <i>Al-Hakīm</i>    | .. The Ever Wise, the Scientist.               |
| <i>Al-Khabīr</i>   | .. The One Who is aware of everything.         |



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<i>Al-Mubdī</i>	.. The Great Originator or Beginner (the First Cause).
<i>Al-Mo'hyi</i>	.. The Life-Giver.
<i>Al-Jabbār</i>	.. He Who compels others to work according to His Will.
<i>Al-Hay</i>	.. The Ever-Living.
<i>Al-Mo'id</i>	.. The Restorer.
<i>Al-Qayyūm</i>	.. The Self-Subsistent, One Who sustains others.
<i>Al-Muqaddim</i>	.. He Who gives others a pre- ference.
<i>Al-Azli</i>	.. The Eternal.
<i>Al-Ba'is</i>	.. The Resurrector.
<i>Al-Bāqī</i>	.. The Survivor.
<i>Al-Momīt</i>	.. He Who puts another to death.
<i>Al-Awwal</i>	.. The First.
<i>Al-A'khir</i>	.. The Last.

Let a scientist study our gigantic solar system, nay, he need not go so far—let him study his own person and put the following questions to himself which the Qur-án has put to guide his intellect :

“ Were they created by nothing ? Are they the creators of themselves ? Created they the heavens and earth ? Nay, rather they have no faith. Hold they thy Lord's treasure ? Bear they the rule supreme ? ”  
(lii : 35-36.)

And the Qur-án challengingly says :

“ Verily, they whom ye call besides God ” (whether they be the idols of the pagans or “ sons ” and “ daughters ” of God or “ man-gods ” of other religions, or the “ energy ” or “ matter ” of the scientists), “ cannot create a fly though they assemble for it and if the fly carry off aught from them they cannot take it away from it. Weak the suppliant and the supplicated. Unworthy the estimate they form of God ! For God is

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Right Powerful and Mighty.” (xxii : 73-74.)

It would be evident to every man that no individual, no group, no nation on this earth, can claim to have mastered all the circumstances, all the incidents in this world. Innumerable are the things which are still beyond the control of man—man who is undoubtedly the most intelligent being on this earth. So the working of the universe on set laws indicates that there must be a Being superior to man Who controls the whole universe, all the circumstances, all the incidents.

Islam would accept as the Author and Sustainer and Controller of the Universe whomsoever or whatsoever the scientists and philosophers would come to propose after full deliberation *provided the Creator or the Author, the Sustainer, or the Controller, is not less qualified than the creatures and provided He has no defect, no imperfections, no impurities, no weaknesses.* Islam accepts only the most perfect God-ideal. That ideal is sublime. It cannot be improved upon, and when sincerely and intelligently believed in as an axiom, *a self-evident Truth*, it solves many an intricate problem relating to the universe and its working. Let every scientist remember that Euclid could not build up his exact science without an axiom. You can measure the two sides of an isosceles triangle to demonstrate that they together are larger than the third, but unless you believe in the axiomatic definition of the “point” you will not be able to prove your proposition. In the same way unless you believe in ALLAH with *all* His Attributes as given in the Qur-án the mystery of the Universe will remain unsolved. After believing in that *self-evident Truth* we must use our intelligence to understand the “how and why” of the universe.

The Qur-an says :

This He has enjoined you with that you may use your intelligence (vi : 152.)



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The Poet S'adi has said :

*Kih be ilm natuan Khuda ra shinakht.*

(Without knowledge it is impossible to *understand* God.)

Muslims have been urged by the Qur-án itself to use their intellect for all things—even for a belief in God.

That the Islamic God-idea is helpful politically, socially and morally, has been proved in practice by the miraculous advance of the Muslims in the space of a very short time and by the social and moral revolution effected by the Prophet Muhammad in his own life-time when they had implicit faith in Allah. The Prophet created a *model nation* on the same God-idea. And it was a unique model indeed. The world has not seen another nation like it in vitality, cohesion, moral, mental and intellectual genius and in the rapidity of its conquests. The Prophet also laid down the foundations with the same God-idea of a world Empire unique in history in its regard and concern for every individual citizen. The more the Muslims believed in the Quranic God-idea the better men they became in all respects and the more they advanced in their intelligence also. In truth a new world was created—new in its religious conceptions, new in political, social, economic and moral ideals—a new culture and a new civilisation were brought into existence in the shortest possible time.

In his introduction to his work "The New World of Islam," Dr. Stoddard writes :

" The rise of Islam is perhaps the most amazing event in human history. Springing from a land and a people alike previously negligible, Islam spread within a century over half the earth, shattering great Empires, overthrowing long-established religions, remoulding the souls of races and building up a *whole new world—the world of Islam*.

" The closer we examine this development the more extraordinary does it appear. The other great religions won their way slowly, by painful struggle, and finally

triumphed with the aid of powerful monarchs converted to the new Faith. Christianity had its Constantine, Buddhism its Asoka, and Zoroastrianism its Cyrus, each lending to his chosen cult the mighty force of secular authority. *Not so Islam.* Arising in a desert land sparsely inhabited by a nomad race previously undistinguished in human annals, Islam sallied forth on its great adventure with the slenderest human backing and against the heaviest material odds. Yet Islam triumphed with seemingly miraculous ease."

The Prophet indeed "remoulded the souls of races." That was his chief miracle. And that he could do only through his God-idea. Rev. W. R. Stephens admits :

"He (Muhammad) was born in a country where political organisation, rational faith and pure morals were unknown. He introduced all three. By a single stroke of masterly genius he simultaneously reformed the political conditions, the religious creed and the moral practices of his countrymen." "This stroke of genius" was no other than his inspired conception of God by which he revolutionized, on the highest moral principles, the political and social institutions.

Above have been given some such attributive names of Allah as are helpful to philosophers and scientists. But Islam does not confine its help only to scientists. After all the world is not for the scientists alone. *The crowning success of Islam lies in helping, as no other institution does, a moralist, a social reformer, a statesman and a legislator.* It is a unique characteristic of Islam that it is both a religion and an institution—marvellous as a religion and no less marvellous as an institution. The God-idea in Islam does not only satisfy our soul, it also satisfies our intellect and our mundane needs. It elevates our character and makes us good not only in ourselves but also for the whole society,—for the whole world.



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There are very many verses of the Qur-án like those quoted below, which help in forming a noble character in man. The opening verses of the chapter *Almumineen* say, "Successful indeed are the Believers (*Muminun*) who humble themselves in their prayers and who eschew what is vain and who give alms and who guard their private parts except for their mates or those whom their right hands possess, for as to them they shall be blameless, but whoever seeks to go beyond these they are transgressors; and who acquit themselves faithfully of their trusts and covenants and those who are mindful of their prayers, these are they who are heirs who shall inherit Paradise, they shall abide therein."—(xxiii : 1-11.)

The Qur-ánic God-idea which is helpful in moral and social advancement and in forming human character has been expressed in the following names of God, besides in several verses of the Holy Qur-án :

*Al-Málik*—the Master; *Al-Málik*—the King; *Al-Qúddus*—the Holy One; *As-Salām*—the Author of Peace; *Al-Jabbár*—One Who compels others to work according to His will; *Al-Ghaffár*—the Great Forgiver; *Al-Quahhár*—He Who dominates over all; *Al-Wahháb*—the Great Bestower; *Ar-Razzāq*—the Great Provider; *Al-'Aleem*—the All-Knower; *As-Sámi*, the Ever-Hearer; *Al-Básir*—the All-Seer; *Al-Hákam*—the Judge; *Al-'Adil*—the Just; *Al-Khabír*—One Who is aware of everything; *Al-Hásib*—the Reckoner; *Al-Muhsi*—the Accountant; *Ar-Ra'oof*—the Lenient, the Kind, specially in working off difficulties; *Malikul-Mulk*—the King of all Kingdoms; *Zul-Jalál wal Ikram*—the Possessor of all Glory and Power, Might and Mercy; *Al-Muqsit*—the Equitable; *Al-Múghni*—the One Who makes

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others rich and contented ; *Al-Hádi*—the Guide; *As-Saboor*—the Patient.

While studying the above attributive names of God one must remember the injunction of the Prophet Muhammad :

“ *TAKHLIQA BI AKHLAQ-ILLAH.*”

(Imbue yourselves with Divine attributes.)

Can anybody conceive a nobler ideal of manhood than one imbued with the above Godly attributes ? Muhammad (may victory always remain with him) and his companions and close followers did imbue themselves with Divine attributes, and it was because of this that in only a few years they changed the centuries-old habits of the Arabs and the Turks and the Moghals, etc., who were barbarous before, but by their influence became heroic and virtuous. It was because of this that in a wonderfully short period a marvellously democratic Nation and a marvellously internationalistic communist State were formed. It was through this that in that democratic and communist Nation, which, within one century, spread all over the world, an insatiable thirst for knowledge and progress was inculcated and Muslims were enabled with lightning speed to conquer a great part of the globe territorially as well as intellectually and morally—in culture as well as in civilization. Can it be possible to form a better Society or State than one consisting of individuals possessing the above given attributes ?

But it might be said that there should be more in the God-idea of any religion than that which can satisfy a philosopher, a scientist or even a statesman, a legislator and a moralist. There must be something to satisfy the cravings of the human soul. Islam does not lack this. *No nation has a record of so many saintly and spiritual men of high eminence as has Islam.*



## THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND SENSUALITY

### THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD AND SENSUALITY

BY MR. S. A. TOTO.

Of all the religious reformers throughout history, no one, other than Muhammad, can rightly claim to have championed the rights of woman. Yet it is not the least of life's little ironies that the married life of this very man should be misconstrued by rival-religionists to further their own activities. Conscious as they are of the silence of their religion in respect of woman's rights, these critics of Islam try to fill the gap of deficiency by reviling Muhammad. Such an attitude is not only absurd but also wicked as the following account of the married life of the Prophet will show.

It is a common fault among certain people to hold that a spiritual life and a married life cannot go together. Such a notion is unhealthy and gives rise to moral perversion. The sexual instinct is a life tendency and cannot become extinct. Our unconscious selves, as modern psychologists have shown, are tricky sprites; we may keep them, like the djinns of the fairy tales, tightly corked up, harmless in an innocent-seeming bottle, but some day a rash hand withdraws the cork and there emerges a vast and untamable spirit, of whose very existence we were ignorant. Islam, therefore, discourages celibacy and has given marriage, through Muhammad, a new meaning. When the advocates of celibacy condemn the companionship of a man and a woman within the wedlock, they are considering the sexual aspect of married life only. The specific purpose of marriage, in Islam, does not limit itself to parenthood alone; it covers many other aspects resulting from the bond of marriage. Muhammad's first wife was rather a great help than a hindrance to him in his early contemplations.

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In his youth he was fond of solitude and spent his time in communion with the mighty Soul of the Universe. He shunned the company of people who at that time stooped to outrageous practices. If he had a trait of sensuality in his character, he would more likely have indulged in these baser pleasures during his youth before the responsibility of Prophethood fell on his shoulders. But Muhammad was exceptional; his character was unblemished from the start. It was his nobility and trustworthiness of character that made a wealthy widow entrust him with the sole charge of her business. His high morality, in this rôle, so impressed the widow that she made proposals of marriage to him. When they married, the Prophet was twenty-five years old and Khadija was fifteen years his senior. For twenty-five years he led a perfectly chaste and monogamous life. Till his dying day, he never forgot the happy associations he had with her. Once, while he was speaking highly of her, Ayesha asked him a very searching question. Had not God given him, in herself, a better substitute for Khadija? "No," replied the Prophet, "she accepted me at a time when everyone else had rejected me." And Ayesha was the only virgin among the wives of the Prophet. Could we in face of these facts suggest, let alone impute to this man, who placed moral virtues above physical charms, any charge of sensuality?

What really marks the married life of the Prophet out from the lives of every other religious reformer is that it possesses traditions well established for their truth. Muslims can never be accused for extolling the virtues of the Prophet without historical proofs. It is not enough to assert a supremacy. Anybody can stake out a claim; the important thing is to substantiate it. Anything written about him, therefore, is in strict accordance with the *Sunna* (codified acts and utterances of the Prophet).



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The institution of Polygamy neither owes its existence to Islam nor to Muhammad; its origin dates far back into history. The holy personages of Judaism preached and practised polygamy with no restriction as to the number of wives. Very little regard was paid to the problem by others who followed and even if some did only the fringe of the problem had been touched. To Muhammad alone was reserved the task of regulating the plurality of wives and allowing polygamy under exceptional circumstances. And this he did accomplish.

The question of polygamy first arose during the period of wars in which the Prophet and his small band of followers were involved. The losses in men in these life and death struggles were so great that the females outnumbered the males. The surplus of population of women they could not alter; but they could alter their marriage laws to suit it, so that society might be for the better. The Qur-ánic verse allowing polygamy, under certain restrictions, was then revealed. Hence the promulgation of polygamy by the Prophet. The value of this injunction is to be measured by its usefulness and tendency. It denotes the flexibility of the Muslim Marriage Code in the sense that it is amenable to all conditions of life—normal as well as abnormal. Again, if physical preservation is the primary factor, moral preservation is equally important, at least it is so in Islam.

Most of the women who came under the protection of the Prophet were widows, and almost all of them except Lady Ayesha past the age of conjugal relations. If the desire for flesh was predominant, his choice would have fallen on virgins. The Prophet himself was then fifty-three years old—the average age at which the Arab of the burning desert loses all attractions for physical charms. Gross indulgence in any form of pleasure, however legitimate, was vetoed by him and the value of control in

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matters relating to sex repeatedly stressed. He prescribed periodical fasting as an exercise of the subjugation of the senses.

These definite instances show that there was no question of ulterior motive in his marriages. His ultimate objective, in adopting polygamy, was to preserve the rectitude of society and leave no loophole for misconduct in any eventuality.

If Muhammad's attitude towards his marriages was individual, nothing would have prevented him from giving vent to his bias when he became the lord of Arabia. A man under straitened conditions of life may assuage his evil desires and tendencies by abuses which he alone can account. It would be very difficult, under these conditions, to definitely decide whether his morality is high or low. We could, however, obtain a true insight into his character by observing how he would behave under the conditions of wealth and power. If he retains his attributes of meekness and humility, then he may be credited with the possession of high morality.

The Prophet did not make the slightest change in his mode of living. His extreme distaste for luxury and utter disregard for personal comfort even when he had every right to a life of comfort, often grieved his contemporaries. Try as they did, they could never prevail upon him to lead a life of comfort. Caliph Omar's testimony in this respect would be worth recording. In Mashraba when he paid a visit to the Prophet, he found, to his surprise, that the Prophet had one sheet of cloth on his body, and one sofa without bedding on it and a pillow stuffed with the bark of the date-palm. In one corner of the room there was a small quantity of barley, in another was spread the skin of an animal, whilst just above his head were hanging a few water-skins. The absence of material comforts in the Prophet's household was too

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much for Omar and he broke into tears. The Prophet inquired of him the reason of his weeping, and Omar replied : " O Prophet of God, I have every reason to weep. The strings with which the sofa is interwoven have made deep impressions on your naked body. The room itself is as comfortless. Is it not unbearable to find the Chosroes of Persia and Emperors of Rome flooded with material enjoyments, while you, who are the Apostle of God, be leading such a simple life—is it not intolerable ?" The Prophet replied : " O, son of Khattab, do you not prefer that they should get the world and I the hereafter ?"

Even after he had attained absolute power over the country and the public treasury was at his disposal, the Prophet and his family went hungry for many nights successively. Ayesha relates that the Prophet never knew what it was to satisfy hunger all through the period beginning with the flight and ending with his death. Yet another trenchant example about the Prophet's abstemious life is furnished by the biographer Muslim. He relates that once a visitor went to the Prophet, and on appearing before him found that the Prophet had tied a piece of cloth very tightly round the waist. When the visitor inquired what the reason was, one of the companions replied to him : " On account of hunger."

When he came into power, his ministerial duties increased, but nothing would keep him back from his communion with God. Laborious days would be followed by long nights at the Mosque where he would stand humbly in the presence of God. His long hours of standing and lack of rest often told on his health ; even in the busy life of Medina people could see his feet swelling.

It, therefore, needs no argument to prove that the life the Prophet of Islam led scarcely lends itself to dissipation. Love of luxury forms an essential part in the life of a sensuous man.

Licentious men have little respect for marital-ties :



marriages are merely *alliances de convenance* contracted either to comply with the law or to dispel public disapproval. Genuine affection being absent, it is a different proposition with their wives. The adoption of either tyrannical or slavish methods might be of avail in making their wives succumb to their evil desires. Let us show how singularly free the Prophet was from this standpoint. Shortly after their immigration into Medina the condition of the Muslims improved. Trade which received an impetus by the spirit of co-ordination among the Muslims flourished and brought prosperity to the inhabitants. As wealth increased, luxuries of the past became conventional necessities. A higher standard of living became general, but the reaction of the boom was most marked on women. The Prophet's household, however, remained unaffected by the change of conditions. Overcome by the desire to have their share of the prosperity like others, the wives of the Prophet tried to prevail upon him the necessity of keeping with times. They were told that as Prophet's wives they should not cherish worldly finery or comforts. If they craved for worldly comforts they could do so, but not as his wives. A sensuous man anxious as he is to maintain or solicit the good-will of his wives, could hardly afford to forgo their wishes in that manner. On the other hand, although Muhammad could not condone any inclination to worldly things, his wives enjoyed the greatest freedom in all spheres of domestic life. His wives used to discuss with him questions which concern women and to which he could not give information except through them. In one of these discussions, Hafsa, who was rather harsh of temperament, lost her temper and called him names. The Prophet was not a whit abashed ; he even went so far as to stop Omar, who had overheard his daughter's outburst, from rebuking her. This incident shows the magnitude of freedom and the toleration he afforded his wives. Again,

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their freedom was not confined to the home alone; his wives took an active interest in his daily work. They went regularly to the Mosque, and said their prayers along with men, standing in a separate row. During the war days, they followed the Prophet to the field and rendered such assistance as removing the dead and looking after the wounded. In short, their individualities were not absorbed by being married to the Prophet.

Muhammad's regard for his wives was genuine and he was equal in his treatment towards everyone of them. It is, we remark in passing, for this reason that a Muslim is not allowed the plurality of wives, if he cannot deal with all of them "with equity." Muhammad often said, "The best of you is the one who treats his wife the best." We, who are daily witnessing the examples of so many eminent men whose public lives may be irreproachable but whose family lives are corrupt, cannot but appreciate this remark. In the narrow sense, if there was a vestige of license in him, there was no necessity for him to marry at all; he could have installed the prettiest woman in Arabia as his "mistress." As a king his power was absolute, and if he so wished, who would have dared to object to the lapses of the monarch? But Muhammad was different: transcendently different in this respect. His invincible innocence was as impregnable as his high esteem for the moral status of woman.

The records of the Arab biographers are not the only sources of information to establish, beyond cavil and doubt, the unblemished character of Muhammad's married life. A cynic used to monkish documents, coloured by priestly prejudice, conscious or not, might remark that we could not credit the records of historians. The testimony of his wives alone will disprove any such suggestion. Very few of his wives had any pretensions to either high birth or accomplishments. Yet these very women, through his association, emerged into noble and virtuous women.

In the privacy of a man's home his merits and demerits are laid bare. His wife has the access to the innermost secret locked in his heart. If there was any weakness, however slight, in the character of Muhammad, his wives would have detected it. If he had exercised tyranny over his wives, they would have denounced him after his death. His wives echoed the unanimous praise of him by the historians. The Prophet's moral conceptions, which could be brought into play within the family circle, have come down to us through his wives. There are very few men, and indeed none, whose private lives will stand such rigid test of history and time.

Is it any wonder that we Muslims revere the private life of this man and feel keenly any hostile criticism ?

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### LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASUL- ALLAH

BY THE HON'BLE MR. M. T. AKBAR, K.C.

The more I read Professor Nicholson's " Idea of Personality in Sufism " the more am I struck with the Professor's object which he had in view when he set out to deliver these lectures. He describes our Holy Prophet as follows :

" Muhammad, as described in the Qur-án, is no more than a man subject to human weaknesses, who receives at intervals the Divine revelation, not from God but from an angel. He has never seen God, he does not share God's secrets, he cannot foretell the future, he can work no miracle: he is only the servant and messenger of Allah." Similarly another Professor (Radakrishnan) says, " For all that, he was only a man like any other mortal, subject to sin and having need, as other men, of the mercy of God." These passages have been quoted by me to show that these professors were out to belittle our Prophet by reducing him to the level of all sinful men. In the first



## **LA ILAHA ILLALLAH MUHAMMAD-UR-RASUL-ALLAH**

place they forget that our Prophet was sent to demonstrate to the world that the Almighty God was Transcendent beyond all conception and that it was a wrong notion to think that any created being can ever hope to rank on an equality with God and that the only One who was worthy of worship by man was Allah and Allah alone. That is why our Holy Prophet so schemed that he should be buried at Medina and not at Mecca for fear that the Muslim pilgrims who visited the Kaaba every year would worship him at his tomb and forget God and His House at Mecca. In the second place some of the passages, in which the Qur-án refers to the Prophet as a man like any other, were in answer to the question of the unbelievers who wished to know why God had not sent an angel with the Divine message to instruct all men equally and directly. The reply was that as the Divine message was meant for man it had to be entrusted to a man who alone could explain it to other men not only by oral instructions but by living example. The Qur-án also emphasizes the fact that an angel has nothing in common with man and that the open descent of an angel into the world would end in the destruction of the world (XVII, 94-98; XV, 7 ; XXI, 7 and 8). These worthy professors having emphasized the passages in the Holy Book relating to the obvious fact that the Prophet like other Prophets was a human being have quietly ignored the other passages in which our Holy Prophet's status and rank as the first of all men is repeatedly referred to in the Qur-án. Whether this omission is due to sheer ignorance or to some other cause I cannot say, and I must content myself by leaving the answer to the judgment of my readers. In Chapter XIV, verse 11, the reply of all the apostles was: "We are nothing but mortals like yourself, but Allah bestows His favours on whom He pleases of His servants, and it is not for us that we should bring you an authority except by Allah's permission."

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Let me at this stage refer to only one passage in the Holy Qur-án as a complete reply to these professors. It is that magnificent passage (33—56) where Allah says that He and His angels are continually showering down blessings on the Holy Prophet and God Almighty calls on all believers to ask for Divine blessings on the Prophet and to salute him with a worthy salutation. Why should the Omnipotent Allah and all His angels call down blessings on a mere man, unless that man has been specially singled out by God for his special favour and grace? Professor Radakrishnan says that the Prophet was sinful as other men. Why does this worthy Professor entirely ignore Chapter 48, verses 1—3, which have been translated by Muhammad Ali as follows: "Surely We have given to you a clear victory. That Allah may rectify for you that which has gone before of the faults attributed to you and that which remains behind and complete His favour to you and guide you on a right way. And that Allah may help you with a mighty help." Those of my readers who are interested in the sinlessness of Prophets should consult Muhammad Ali's *Religion of Islam* and the chapter dealing with the subject. Professor Nicholson says in the passage quoted by me that our Holy Prophet has never seen Allah. He completely ignores the chapter An-Najm (Chapter 53), the mystic meaning of which, I am sure, is beyond the depths of the Professor—

“ When he was on the uppermost horizon  
Then he drew nigh and came down  
Till he was distant two bows' length or even nearer  
And He revealed unto His slave that which He  
revealed.

The heart lied not in seeing what it saw.  
Will ye then dispute with him concerning what he  
seeth?

And verily he saw Him yet another time  
By the lote-tree of the utmost boundary

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Nigh unto which is the Garden of abode.

When that which shroudeth did enshroud the lotetree,

The eye turned not aside nor yet was overbold.

Verily he saw one of the greater revelations of his Lord."

In the words of the Qur-án I should like to ask this Professor, "Will you then dispute with him concerning what he seeth?"

Professor Nicholson in yet another passage says: "The vision of Judgment stirred Muhammad to the depths of his soul," implying that he (the Professor) had no fear of the Day of Judgment. Yet another professor referred to the same idea and attributed our Prophet's frame of mind to the overwhelming fear of death and of the Day of Judgment. All true Prophets of God and Saints had undoubtedly that fear. Only professors and the busy modern men have lost that fear. As Mr. Middleton Murry says of Hamlet, the motive for his hesitation was his fear of death and "something after death." Says Mr. Murry: "Its motive in the play is tremendous, once it is recognized. Yet it is hard for us of the twentieth century really to recognize it. Our sensitivity is dulled in this regard. We have become immune from the terror of the after-life. In so far as we still believe in personal immortality and existence after death we believe in them as conditions which hold no terrors for us; and unconsciously we tend to endow Hamlet with the same immunity. We love to commit anachronism for the benefit of our heroes . . . . Our mistake is not that we 'psychologise' Hamlet . . . but that we fit him to the pattern of our modern psychology." These professors having lost the fear of God, of death and the after-life as a God had suffered death for their sins and had shouldered their responsibility, it was the mission of our Prophet to correct this slack irresponsible view of



life and to caution man against God, for the Qur-án says, "Allah warns you against Himself." The word "Ithacullah" occurs in almost every chapter. Need I quote other passages to show the transcendent position which the Prophet holds amongst men? His grief for the whole of humanity is depicted by Allah Himself in Chapter IX, verse 128. In Chapter XXXIII, verses 45 and 46, the Prophet is called as a witness, a bearer of good news, a warner, one inviting to Allah by His permission, and as a light-giving torch. He is a mercy to the whole universe (25—1; 7—158; 34—28) and he is Al-Amin who is entitled to intercede for the sinners (43—86; 9—103; 3—158; 4—64; 24—62; 47—19; 60—12—see Muhammad Ali's *Religion of Islam*). I need not pile up other examples from the Holy Book to show the Prophet's unique position among men. "This day," says Allah, "have I perfected for you your religion and completed on you My Blessing" (v. 3). No wonder a great Sufi Saint described Rasulallah as the *Sayidul Wujood*, the head and lord of all created beings. I hope I have now made it clear that the emphasis was laid in the Qur-án for the first time in all religions on the unique Transcendence of Allah and that He must not be brought down to the level of His creation, including Angels, Prophets, Saints and mere men. And further that He is not in the habit of masquerading as man. The emphasis was equally strongly laid on the position of the Holy Prophet, namely, that he was the head of all created beings, the seal and the last of all Prophets through whom alone man can hope to reach the Omnipotent and Transcendent Allah. This was made clear from the very beginning when the declaration of the Islamic formula of faith was made a compulsory article of faith in the religion of Islam. In the Qur-án, Ch. III—verse 30, the only way for those who love Allah was to follow the Prophet's way. "Obey Allah and the Apostle" was the injunction. In Chapter

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IV, verse 80, the words are " whoever obeys the Apostle, he indeed obeys Allah." (See also 5—92.) Those who swear allegiance to the Prophet are said to swear allegiance to Allah. " The hand of Allah is above their hands " (48—10). The Arabic word *Muta* is used with reference to the Holy Prophet in Chapter 81, verses 19—25 (see also 4—64 and Muhammad Ali's Translation, note 2683). Professor Nicholson ignores all these passages and he says complacently that Imam Ghazzali introduced a Being whom he called the *Al-muta* in the *Mishkat-al-Anwar*, and he hints that this idea was introduced later by the Muslim Saints who may have borrowed the idea from the Christian doctrines or from the Logos doctrine (whatever that may mean). He even goes on to say that " Ghazzali may have borrowed the name *Muta* from the Qur-ánic text in III—29." The Professor then very obligingly branches off into Arabic grammar and says: " Those of you who read Arabic know that the word *Muta* is the participle of the same verb of which *Atiu* is the imperative. The Divine order to obey Muhammad implies that, for every good Moslem, Muhammad is *Al-muta* 'the obeyed one.' " Professor Nicholson, therefore, suggests that Imam Ghazzali coined the word *Al-muta* to fit the Prophet, making a participle of the verb *Atiu* in III—29; and Ghazzali did this—why? because he was attracted by the Christian doctrines. " It must have occurred to many of you," says the Professor, " that the ideas which we have been discussing—the ideas developed in later Sufism concerning the person of Muhammad—show a remarkable likeness to what is known in Christian theology as the doctrine of a mediator. I am not qualified to speak with any authority on the subject." It will be seen from the last sentence that it is a case of the blind leading the blind, for the very word *Al-muta* is used by Allah in 81—21 of the Qur-án with reference to our Prophet and all the laboured thesis of the Professor to prove that the

conception of our Prophet has been altered in later times by contact with other forms of religion falls to the ground miserably. If we leave these professors alone, and confine ourselves to the Islamic formula of faith and the passages in the Qur-án relating to our Holy Prophet we will be in a better position to appreciate the Transcendence of Allah above all His creatures and the Transcendence of Prophet Muhammad among all created beings. I hope my readers will reflect deeply on the passage from the Qur-án in Chapter 33, verse 56, the one passage on which I have pondered for nearly 20 years, to understand the secret of our Prophet. Allah and His Angels bless the Prophet and we Muslims are called upon to do likewise. If from the discoveries made by modern science my readers can appreciate the grandeur and glory of Allah, should they not ask themselves why this Transcendent Deity and all His Angels should bless one out of the infinite number of His created beings? In the same breath we Muslims are asked to do the same—why? The answer will be found in Ghazzali's *Miskhat-al-Anwar*. God is infinite and when the Infinite comes into contact with the finite, the latter is shattered and destroyed. God's light is so powerful and so intense that the universe cannot withstand the impact of His direct Light, so His Light has to be reflected from another medium, created out of His Grace for this very purpose of withstanding God's Light, and it is this Light reflected in this way from the *Haqiqatul Muhammadiyah* which we miserable mortals can bear and withstand. Allah says in the Qur-án, "My servant who attains to My environment by means of optional devotions becomes immortal; and at last I make him My beloved. When I make him My beloved, I become his ears by which he hears, his eyes by which he sees, his hands by which he catches, his tongue by which he speaks, and his feet by which he walks."



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This is not the doctrine of merger of man with God, but only the projection into man, out of His mercy, of a few of God's attributes, suitable to and harmonious with man's constitution and make as he appears in this world. As regards the progress he has to make after death that is unending and infinite and only known to Allah. Frithjof Schuon in an article on Christianity and Islam in a Hindu magazine "Triveni" has partly caught the idea when he says: "The Christian doctrine, as well as the Islamic doctrine, starts from a theistic idea, but it particularly insists on the Trinitarian aspect of the Divinity; God is incarnate and redeems the world; the Principle descends to manifestation in order to re-establish the disturbed equilibrium. According to the Islamic doctrine God asserts Himself by His Unity; He does not become incarnate by virtue of an interior distinction; He does not redeem the world, He absorbs it by means of Islam. He does not descend to manifestation; He projects Himself therein, as the sun is projected by its light; this projection permits humanity to participate in Him. According to Christianity, the support of all interior realization, namely, the mystery of Redemption, is linked to an idea of ransom and of sacrifice. In Christian Mysticism moral effort is all-in-all, whereas intellectual effort, which is all in Sufi initiation, has hardly any part therein. If Islam, like all orthodox traditions, accepts suffering as a support of spiritual realization, it views it nevertheless from another angle, the conception of merit being much less developed in Islam than in Christianity; Muslim holiness is not of mystical but of intellectual essence like all Oriental holiness; perfect abandonment to the Divine Will or absolute passivity towards the Pure Act, the Divine Principle, is the form it assumes; asceticism, on the contrary, is a form of *jihad* (Holy War), therefore an active attitude towards multiplicity and differentiation, and thus compensates in a way for the attitude of abandonment.

“ Thus it is that a Mussalman, for whom the Qur-án is what Christ is for a Christian, often reproaches the latter for not having a book equivalent to the Qur-án, a single book, at the same time doctrinal and legislative, and written in the very language of the revelation ; for the numerous Gospels and other Texts of the New Testament are to his eyes the mark of a division, aggravated by the fact that these Scriptures have not been preserved in the language spoken by Christ, but in a non-Semitic language, or have even been translated from this latter into another language equally strange to the peoples issued from Abraham. Moreover these Texts can be translated into any foreign language.”

I hope my readers will now appreciate to some extent the position of the Holy Prophet in Islam, or, in other words, the second half of the Islamic formula of faith. It is more difficult to understand the second half than the first half. They will now be in a position to gauge exactly the following extract from Paul Brunton's “ A Search in Secret Egypt,” a book which should be read by all Muslims :

“ Muhammad's marked difference from most Oriental Prophets was that he opposed the tendency to withdraw from the social and public duties of life which usually accompanies extreme religious devotion ; he made it clear that monks and monasteries were undesirable in Islam ; and he extended no approval to monkish doctrines involving the death of human affections.

“ It is a matter of regret that so little is known of the Islamic faith by the average Westerner ; even that little is usually partly erroneous, if not wholly incorrect.

“ Muhammad taught men not to be ashamed to kneel and worship this Invisible King, to go down on their knees in the open street.

“ It is time we got rid of some of these misconceptions of this great man, Muhammad, and of his great religion,

## "MY BELIEF"—I

Islam, which becloud our minds. It is time that we understood why the magic of his name is such that millions, comprising nearly one-seventh of the human race, from the western shores of Africa to the eastern shores of China, call down daily blessings upon him. It is time we recognized the reality of the fervour of these men, the Muslims, and why the quickly uttered "Allah" of European pronunciation is a pitiful caricature of the fervent, long-drawn, heartfelt, two-syllabled "Al-lah" of the Oriental, who devoutly prolongs the second syllable.

"Night had opened her eyes, twinkling with thousands of starry jewels as her adornment, when I stood again in the street outside El Azhar, gazing absent-mindedly at nothing in particular. The crescent moon shone through a mist surrounded by an indigo-blue sky. Then the strong tenor voice of the mosque's muezzin rang out upon the air, resonantly proclaiming, from his high turret, the Oneness of God.

"Now throughout this city of carved gateways, fretted geometrical arches and tiled courtyards, watched over by Allah and His Angels, men were falling on their knees, with faces turned towards Mecca and repeating those simple words: 'GOD IS MOST GREAT!'"

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## "MY BELIEF"—I

BY MADAME KHALIDA BUCHANAN-HAMILTON

*(President of the Muslim Society in Great Britain.)*

[This article is one of a series of "My Belief" published in the "Woking Review," Woking.—*Ed.*]

I think the sublimest conception of life is the one in which we regard ourselves as the agents of a Perfect Being Who guides and controls our Destiny. It is absurd to think that we can chalk out and control the destiny of Humanity when even the greatest of us cannot control our own impulses and do not know when we start our



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life and how we are going to end it. If, instead of having this sense of Providence instilled into our minds, we had been left at the hands of our own impulses, which are nothing but forces of arrogance and impetuosity, we would long have been extinct from the world as social beings, attempting the perfection of ourselves—individually and collectively.

As for the nature of this Providence whom we should apply to in spirit for the guidance of our individual and collective destinies, there is a divergence of opinion. I personally am inclined to think that the person of the Providence should be one and all-comprehensive—admitting of no division and decentralization. People in this country talk so glibly about the different things in Islam, but they seldom take the trouble of understanding the spiritual meaning of the Monotheism for which that religion stands.

People would be well advised to recognize the fact that all attempts to confuse the issue raised on this score by the Islamic Faith are inevitably leading to the disintegration of the Socio-Spiritual life of Humanity.

Now, if the Will at the source is decidedly One, and possesses a perfect resourcefulness that comprehends all time and space, it is only reasonable to think that the procedure adopted for the guidance of Humanity must be the same all throughout and all over the world. If the moral and spiritual guidance of Humanity was effected in one nation and at one time through any incarnation of God, it must be the same in other nations and at other times. But if it had been through Prophethood in one nation and at one time, the same should be the case in all other nations and at all other times. It is this fact, more than all others, that made me change my Faith from Christianity to Islam. For, if I am to believe in the theory of Incarnation as presented by Christianity, other-

## **"MY BELIEF"—I**

wise a sublime religion, I find myself morally obliged to believe in all those God-incarnations which are upheld by different pagan nations. Indeed the Qur-án brought a great relief to my spiritual mind by stating that the method of God's revealing His Will to Humanity as experienced and witnessed by the numerous and successive generations of Hebrew Prophets has been the one and only method known to Humanity, and that the method of Incarnation was only the figment of the pagan mind, which has no foundation in fact. The Qur-án clearly lays it down that all the religious heroes worshipped as Incarnations of the Divinity were nothing but human beings inspired by the Holy Spirit of God, and were deified only after their death.

### *The Islamic Conception of Prophethood*

I quite realize, however, the difficulty of a Christian in appreciating the effectiveness of Prophethood in the matter of the spiritual Redemption of Humanity, for his conception of Prophethood is the effect of the stories he reads of the Prophets in the Old Testament which we possess. If the Prophets were what these stories would have us believe, it is indeed only possible that instead of leading us to Salvation they will lead us to perdition, unless some more effective method were adopted for our Redemption.

The Islamic conception of Prophethood, which, in my opinion, is the original conception of it in the Hebrew Tradition as well, is very different. The Prophet, receiving as he does the direct touch of the perfect attributes of God, is, according to Islam, the moving embodiment of all positive virtues, whose very company transforms the most sinful into a virtuous man. In fact, it is absurd to think that the Fountain-head of all virtue and purity will speak to a person who is more impure than an average man of the world, as the Prophets are depicted to be in our Old

Testament Records, or that he should be leading a whole nation into moral conduct and spiritual elevations. The Qur-án, therefore, gives me a great reassurance when it asserts that all those stories in the Old Testament that hold up the Prophets in a bad light are spurious.

Given the Islamic standard of spirituality in the Prophet, humanity needs only Prophets, and nothing more or less than Prophets, for its Redemption. The theory of Incarnation would appear not only unnecessary, but indeed confusing. If God would take material shape for our Redemption, what would happen to His responsibilities as the Controller of the Universe and its Destinies? Christianity tries to solve this difficulty by assuming another person in the Divinity called the Father. But this only confuses the issue of the control. It is only the power at the source that should be called God, and not the agencies that are subordinate to it. If, however, we ascribe Divinity both to the Invisible Spiritual Power that is at the source of Creation and to the supposed Incarnation whom people find living among them, we create a diarchy in the Universe which is incompatible with any peaceful and progressive administration of it. Moreover, the rôle of God as an Incarnation has always been found to be one of helplessness, whereas He is found to be better able to manage the situation in His invisibility. To me, this conception of God Incarnation seems to be the result of spiritual poverty in a nation that prevents it from perceiving spiritual things spiritually.

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## CORRESPONDENCE

## CORRESPONDENCE

SHEFFIELD.

THE IMAM,  
THE MOSQUE, WOKING.

DEAR SIR,

As I am a Muslim who wishes to keep the forthcoming Ramadan Fasts, will you kindly be so good as to send me such a calendar as will keep me enlightened regarding the times both of the openings and the closings of the fasts.

Also I am very anxious to read the Holy Qur-án. Since I am not in a position to *buy* a copy, will you lend me a copy for a month? If you are so kind, I shall truly be grateful to you.

Yours truly,

A. M. HOYAYEN.

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HILLMOTTON ROAD, RUGBY.

DEAR SIR,

I am very interested in Islam, and I am writing this letter in the hope that you will be kind enough to supply me with all necessary information, as also send me such free literature as may enable me to understand your religion.

Yours truly,

N. L.

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CROWN COURT, CHEAPSIDE,

LONDON, E.C.2.

DEAR SIR,

I have read one or two pamphlets issued by your Mission, and I have read about Islam in a book on the comparative study of religion and otherwise, and I want to know more about it. If any lectures are given, perhaps you will let me know.

Yours truly,

W. O. B.

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LIVERPOOL ROAD,

HOLLOWAY, N.7.

SIR,

Please pardon my writing to you, since I do not know of any other place to which I can write.

For a long time I have been desirous of joining your beautiful religion. I have never been baptised into any faith, and so feel myself an outcaste. I have, however, been a student of comparative religion, with the result that now I have come to the conclusion that, from my own point of view, yours is the most perfect religion. So I shall be very grateful if you could help me in any way, as for instance, inform me as to the vicinity of the nearest Church of your religion from my private address.

Also, kindly let me know all the necessary preliminaries to joining your Faith.

Yours faithfully,

F. A. C.

BROCCO BANK,  
SHEFFIELD.

SIR,

Having been resident for very many years in the East, I am greatly interested in any literature relative to the Islamic Faith.

Would you be so very kind as to inform me whether you have any books for sale on this subject? I should like a copy of the Qur-ân translated into the English language.

Thanking you in anticipation, and trusting to receive a reply from you at your early convenience.

Yours faithfully,

J. H. G. J.

4th November 1936.

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## NOTES AND COMMENTS

### *Religion and Force*

Absolute non-violence or pacificism has been the slogan of certain types of religious people from time immemorial, but history fails to present a single instance of its practice even by the most enthusiastic among the preachers of this doctrine. In the case of Christianity, the application of force has been recognized in practice not only in matters political, but, ironically as it may seem, even in the matter of religion. "Resist not him that is evil" has throughout Christianity been honoured in the breach, and—which surprises a student of history—that in a degree not to be found in the contemporary history of other religious communities. Muslims, Jews and pagans all have sufficient experience of the religious tolerance as practised by the preachers of the Gospels. Tolerance to other religions, one cannot afford to forget, was shown by the States of Christendom only when they ceased to be religious; in other words, when they were separated from the Church.

### *The Attitude of the Church towards Resistance*

Although debarred from advocating force in matters religious, the Church could not be cured of its predilection for force. If religious persecution and

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warfare could not be revived, the way of political warfare was always open, and the Church did not miss any opportunity to encourage and bless them in any circumstances. Its conduct in this matter has, indeed, been so ludicrous that it has brought disgrace upon the fair name of religion. The sceptics and the unbelievers were certainly justified in ridiculing religion, when they found that armies of the contending parties in the last war were all blessed in the name of God and justice, by their respective Churches.

### *The Charge of Violence against Islam.*

Yet it is the same Church which has spared no pains to prove to the world that Islam cannot be a moral code for Humanity because it advocates force and resistance. Influenced by this propaganda, pious Christians all over the world have come to regard Islam as a religion of violence and bloodshed, and completely differentiated from Christianity, which, by a strange mis-reading of facts, is considered to be a religion of peace. Those, however, who have ever read history, know that of all the revealed religions it is Islam alone that can officially tolerate, and that has in practice tolerated, since its inception, every other religion. Actually it cannot do otherwise, because the recognition of the divine origin of other religions is one of Islam's basic principles. What has, therefore, been held up as religious violence in Islam is either fighting in self-defence (as it has never believed in absolute pacificism) or a war made on a non-Muslim nation by some conqueror or conquerors who happened to believe in Islam. The latter type of warfare, although Islam does not sanction it, nevertheless stands justified by the universal practice of all other religious communities, of whom Christians are by far the most important. As for the first type, retaliation and resistance to wrong and persecution under given conditions are declared to be incumbent



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upon the believers, and the principles on which this ordinance is based are wisely enunciated in the Book. These are as follows : (1) "Whoever slays a soul . . . it is as though he slew all men ; and whoever keeps it alive, it is as though he kept alive all men " (5 : 32) ; (2) " And there is life for you in (the law of) retaliation, O men of understanding, that you may guard yourselves " (2 : 179) ; (3) " And persecution is severer than slaughter " (2 : 191). The circumstances in which these principles may or may not be relaxed are also exhaustively discussed, and any sensible man who gives them calm consideration will readily admit that the charge of violence, as levelled against Islam, is based upon either wilful misrepresentation or unenlightened misunderstanding.

### *Christian Sentimentalism.*

In spite of all these facts about Islam and Christianity, there are still people in Christendom who, either from lack of proper comprehension or because of temperamental unfitness for the sterner aspects of life, are trying to make non-resistance a political and administrative principle, and are thus striving to prove the superiority of their imaginary Christian way of life over other ways, including that of Islam.

### *The Primate's Announcement.*

Whatever the sentimentalists and the visionaries may think or do, the Laws of Nature are immutable and, whenever any matter concerning life and existence is brought to the test of reality, the actual principle that governs it, has, perforce, to be admitted even by the most insincere. Thus Dr. Lang, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the upholder in England of the "undefiled tradition of the Christian faith," which includes the principle of non-resistance to evil, has at last, according to the report in the *Daily Telegraph* dated October 13th, 1936, stated his interpretation of the Christian attitude

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towards resistance. He is reported to have declared that—

1. The force of an army used for the purpose of defence would be right.
2. That defence would include Trade Routes.
3. The Church made no departure from any Christian principle in laying it down that it was lawful for Christian men to wear weapons and to serve in wars.
4. Some would never be impressed by non-resistance. They would only take advantage of it.

### *Absolute Non-resistance, a Wrong Principle.*

Further discussing the matter of complete pacificism, the Archbishop is reported to have remarked: "It could be commended with great impressiveness but, if pressed to its logical conclusion, it must lead to results which could not be right. It would bring greater evils than those sought to avoid."

### *The State and the Individual.*

The Primate further enunciates a new principle with reference to the theory of non-resistance. He draws a distinction between the individual and the State. According to this principle, one can afford to be pacifist in private wrongs, but not in public wrongs or in injury to the State. His observations on this point are summed up in the newspaper reports as follows:

"The State was not an individual. It was the community organised for Government: it was the Trustee for a multitude of individuals: it existed to give them protection."

"The use of force by the State was the ministry of God for the protection of people.

"If that were true of the State in its domestic relations, it was equally true for the State in its international

relations. It all depended on the motive or intention with which it was used.

“If the force of an army was used for national aggression, or for the acquisition or self-assertion, it was wrong. If it were used for the defence of the people, it was right.”

## *The Mysterious Position of Christianity.*

While reading this splendid expression of opinion (by the Primate), on the topic of force, we were wondering to what religious doctrine we were listening—Christian or Muslim? The position of the Christian religious authorities is, indeed, very enviable. They have one interpretation of religion to compare with other religions, and quite a different one to be applied to the lives of their followers. Their greatest advantage, however, is that, whereas they are supposed to speak on behalf of their religion, they speak only on their own behalf, and say, not what their religion teaches, but what they think people ought to do in a certain matter. In this particular case, while claiming to present the teachings of the Christian religion, the Primate was presenting to his followers only the teachings of Muhammad, whom he and his Church are only too ready to regard as the teacher of violence. The distinction that he draws between the State and the individual, the fact that a section of humanity understands only one power, namely, resistance, and the further fact that the justification of war lies in the motive that prompts it—are all echo of the teachings of Muhammad, and cannot be deduced from anything in the recorded sayings and acts of Jesus, “The Prince of Peace.” In spite of this our friends remain Christians, and are opposed to Muhammad as a religious teacher!



## BOOK REVIEWS

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Muhammad the Man—and his Faith.

*By Tor Andrae. Translated by Theophil Menzel (George Allen and Unwin Ltd., London, 1936), pp. 274. Price 8s. 6d.*

This is a fresh addition to the long list of studies on the Prophet's life by the scholars of Christendom.

The impression left on my mind after reading the volume is that it is the work of one who has inherited on the one hand the traditional belief of Christianity, that the example and teachings of Jesus as given in the Gospels and developed by the successive generations of leaders of the Christian Churches are the final word on the moral aspirations of humanity, and has on the other hand the intellectual urge of current times to understand the various historical phenomena with an unbiassed mind. In fact, the influence of religious tradition on the intellect of man has not been properly evaluated so far. The influence of the Christian tradition has, for example, been so striking in its impression on the European mind that, not to speak of ordinary thinkers, even a Bernard Shaw, nay, even a Neitzsche, has not been free from it ; and it is this fact which is at the bottom of intellectual Europe's inability to appreciate the character of the Holy Prophet Muhammad, as distinguished from his principles and teachings. The subconscious argument in the European mind is somewhat like this : Anyone who is different from Christ must be worse than Christ. To the credit of the present author, however, it must be said that he makes no secret of this influence, as the concluding words of his book show, for he writes :

“ In spite of everything that can be said in defence of Muhammad's religious integrity and his loyalty to his call, his endurance, his liberality and his generosity, we are not doing the Prophet of Islam an injustice when we

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conclude that his moral personality does not stand upon the same level with his other endowments ; and, indeed, not even upon the same level with his religious endowments. But if we would be fair to him we must not forget that, consciously or unconsciously, we Christians are inclined to compare Muhammad with the unsurpassed and exalted figure whom we meet in the Gospels, and that we cannot avoid seeing his historical personality against the background of the perfect moral ideal to which the faith of his followers tried to exalt him. And when it is measured by such a standard, what personality is not found wanting ? ”

Apart from this general predilection the author's presentation of the Prophet's character betrays a very serious lack of right information. He, evidently, is not aware of the distinction made by the Muslim theologians between the authentic reports of the Prophet's deeds and sayings and the unauthentic ones. It is an elaborate science which has scarcely been studied up to this time by the Western scholars of the Islamic traditions. It is remarkable that whenever the author shows an appreciation of the Prophet's character he gives a reference from the authentic traditions. But whenever it is shown in a bad light, either no authority is cited, or an authority is cited which is repudiated by Muslim theologians as unauthentic. Of these unreliable authorities Waqidi's name is of special mention, from whom the author has freely borrowed his materials.

Another drawback of the author's information about Islam is that he appears to be completely ignorant of the revivalist movement in Islam, which has of late been carrying on its raids on Western Christianity. The literature of this Movement rendering Islam and its Prophet easy for the European understanding is so ample and widespread that it is surprising that a scholar of Professor Tor Andrae's standing should be completely

## BOOK REVIEWS

unaware of it. A nodding acquaintance with this literature would have saved the Professor from the reproach of naively repeating the long-exploded Christian allegations against the conduct of the Prophet—like the story of his marriage with Zainab and that of his compromise with the pagan Arab cult of idol-worship.

With all these drawbacks—sentimental and intellectual—the book is a sincere attempt at a critical appreciation of the Prophet's character and message, and presents a new aspect of the study of the subject—*viz.*, psychological. And here, one might say, the author is at his best, although, owing to the wrong premises, which are so characteristic of Western students of the subject, his conclusions, in most cases, though plausible, are very far from being correct.

A. D. A.

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